

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08

FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 L-03 H-01

NSC-05 SS-15 STR-07 CEA-01 HA-05 DEAE-00 SNM-05

DPW-01 AGRE-00 PA-01 /114 W

-----073274 011133Z /17

P 011000Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9063

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 617

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 0277

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP PEPR SHUM SNAR EAID LA US (ESCAP) (YOUNG, ANDREW J.)

SUBJECT: ESCAP MEETING: AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S BILATERAL TALKS  
WITH LPDR REPRESENTATIVE

REF: A STATE 048882, B 77 VIENTIANE 1244, G VIENTIANE  
0017

SUMMARY: EMBASSY VIENTIANE HAS INFORMED LPDR MFA OF  
AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S DESIRE TO MEET WITH THE CHIEF OF THE  
LPDR DELEGATION TO THE ESCAP MEETING IN BANGKOK. LAO  
DELEGATION WILL BE HEADED BY MFA VICE MINISTER NOUPHAN  
SITHPASAY.

NOUPHAN IS LIKELY TO QUESTION AMBASSADOR YOUNG REGARD-  
ING PROSPECTS FOR U.S. EMERGENCY FOOD AID TO THE LPDR.

WE SUGGEST THAT AMBASSADOR YOUNG RAISE THE FOLLOWING  
POINTS WITH NOUPHAN: A) USG CONCERN OVER REPORTED  
HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN THE LPDR; B) NON-COMPLICITY OF  
USG IN ON-GOING LAO ANTI-GOVERNMENT INSURGENCY; C) US  
CONCERN ABOUT ILLICIT NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING WHICH  
ORIGINATES IN "GOLDEN TRIANGLE" AND USG INTEREST IN

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COOPERATING WITH GOVERNMENTS WHICH DEMONSTRATE COMMIT-  
MENT TO COMBAT ILLICIT NARCOTIC PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICK-  
ING; AND D) CONTINUING US PUBLIC AND USG DESIRE TO  
OBTAIN AS FULL AN ACCOUNTING AS POSSIBLE FOR US SERVICE-  
MEN MISSING IN ACTION IN LAOS. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBOFF MET WITH LAO OFFICIALS IN THE MINISTRY OF

FOREIGN AFFAIRS' DEPARTMENT OF INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATIONS FEBRUARY 28 AND MARCH 1 TO INFORM THEM THAT AMBASSADOR YOUNG WISHED TO MEET WITH THE CHIEF OF THE LAO DELEGATION TO THE ESCAP MEETING IN BANGKOK (REF A). THE LAO OFFICIALS SAID THAT THEY WOULD INFORM THE DELEGATION CHIEF, VICE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS NOUPHAN SITHPASAY. (THE IDENTITY OF THE FIVE OTHER DELEGATION MEMBERS WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE, THOUGH ONE OF THESE MEMBERS WOULD REPORTEDLY BE FROM THE LAO EMBASSY IN BANGKOK.)

2. A CURRENT LPDR CONCERN AND LIKELY TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION IS THE NATURE AND LIKELIHOOD OF A U.S. RESPONSE TO THE LPDR'S EMERGENCY FOOD AID APPEAL. THE APPEAL WAS ISSUED THROUGH THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN AUGUST (REF B) AND BILATERALLY TO ALL NATIONS WITH REPRESENTATION IN VIENTIANE (INCLUDING THE U.S.) IN JANUARY (REF C). LAO RICE PRODUCTION, ALREADY LIMITED BY PRIMITIVE AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE GOVERNMENT AGRICULTURAL POLICIES, WAS SEVERELY IMPAIRED BY WIDESPREAD DROUGHT AND FLOODING DURING THE 1977 GROWING SEASON.

3. THE UNDP/LPDR PRODUCED A JOINT REPORT IN DECEMBER ESTIMATING THAT THE LPDR WOULD NEED APPROXIMATELY 112,000 TONS OF RICE (OR EQUIVALENT FOODSTUFFS) FROM  
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FOREIGN SOURCES IN 1978 TO COMPENSATE FOR THE SHORTFALL IN THE 1977 HARVEST. (THE JANUARY BILATERAL APPEAL REPORTED A SHORTFALL OF 259,070 TONS RELATIVE TO AVERAGE ANNUAL LAO RICE PRODUCTION, BUT THIS FIGURE IS BASED ON WHAT EMBASSY VIENTIANE BELIEVES TO BE AN EXAGGERATED ESTIMATE OF AVERAGE ANNUAL PRODUCTION.)

4. EMBASSY VIENTIANE HAS EXPLAINED TO ARIOUS LAO OFFICIALS THE DIFFICULT DOMESTIC POLITICAL COURSE FACING ANY LAO FOOD APPEAL TO THE U.S. VICE MINISTER NOUPHAN MAY SEEK AN AUTHORITATIVE BRIEFING ON PROSPECTS FOR U.S. FOOD ASSISTANCE FROM AMBASSADOR YOUNG.

5. THE DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL OF APPROXIMATELY 40,000 LAO CITIZENS UNDER CONDITIONS RANGING FROM SIMPLE AGRICULTURAL WORK CAMPS TO CONCENTRATION CAMPS, THE GOVERNMENT POLICY OF FIRING ON REFUGEES ATTEMPTING TO FLEE TO THAILAND ACROSS THE MEKONG, PLUS ASSORTED OTHER GOVERNMENT PRACTICES (SEE STATE DEPARTMENT HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT FOR LAOS) CONSTITUTE A PATTERN OF SEVERE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE IN LAOS. EXPRESSION OF USG CONCERN OVER

SUCH ABUSES WOULD OFFER THE LAO A CANDID US PERSPECTIVE  
ON A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR AFFECTING THE POSSIBILITY OF  
IMPROVED US-LPDR RELATIONS.

6. LPDR DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN MEDIA CONTINUE TO MAKE  
THINLY VEILED ALLEGATIONS OF US COMPLICITY IN ANTI-  
GOVERNMENT INSURGENT ACTIVITY. AUTHORITATIVE ASSURANCE  
BY AMBASSADOR YOUNG THAT THE USG NEITHER APPROVES OF  
NOR PARTICIPATES IN SUCH ACTIVITY COULD BE USEFUL IN  
ADVANCING LAO-U.S. RELATIONS.

7. AMBASSADOR YOUNG MIGHT REITERATE DR. PETER BOURNE'S  
EARLIER EXPRESSIONS OF DEEP USG CONCERN REGARDING THE  
INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKING IN ILLICIT NARCOTICS WHICH  
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ORIGINATE IN THE "GOLDEN TRIANGLE." HE COULD ALSO  
MENTION USG INTEREST IN COOPERATING WITH THOSE GOVERN-  
MENTS THAT EVIDENCE A SERIOUS COMMITMENT TO THE  
ERADICATION OF ILLICIT NARCOTIC PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICK-  
ING.

8. AMBASSADOR YOUNG MIGHT FINALLY REITERATE CONTINUING  
US PUBLIC AND USG DESIRE TO OBTAIN AS FULL AN ACCOUNTING  
AS POSSIBLE OF U.S. SERVICEMEN LISTED AS MISSING IN  
ACTION IN LAOS.  
ROBERTS

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## Message Attributes

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